Subject: Latin American gold coin collection

ANS member, 1915-1919 (his death).

Williams, Harry F.

[Chicago, IL]

1914-1918

Member of Valuation Committee of Cook Co. Real Estate Board, 1908-1909

HARRY F. WILLIAMS
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REAL ESTATE LOANS

Telephone Randolph 1750

Rooms 401-402 Reaper Block,

CHICAGO, ILL. Dec 17 1914

Value of Morelos Coin

5 Colones Costa Rica
10 Sucres Ecuador

Mr Howland Wood
New York.

Dear Sir

Your favor of 15th inst at hand. I certainly would illustrate the Morelos gold coin. I never saw or heard of one of that size in gold. In fact I have seen only one in gold of his issue. That one weighed over 11 Grammes and was not of yellow gold but looked more like silver with a yellowish tinge. It however assayed very high in gold as the holder sold it to a refiner for its metal value and got the money instead of having it assayed and then proving to me and others that we were wrong in saying it was not gold. (I would have paid $100.00 quickly for it). I have never heard of any other piece. Return your letter with rubbing etc.

Please do not use my notes and stars on the list. They were put there for your information.

As to the list of other coins sent by you I have never seen the 5 Soles of Peru illustrated, nor for that matter, the 10 Soles which I own also. All of the others of early dates have been illustrated to my knowledge. Of the later dates I have not seen the 5 Colones of Costa Rica, the 10 Sucres of Ecuador or the 10 Peso (1905 type) of Chile, illustrated

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but I did not send any examples as they are not rare and at present being issued. There is no reason however why you should not place them among the illustrations.

The list shows a Nicaragua Ferd VII 1817 Oaxa.

Is the mint mark on this coin "NR" or "ℕR"?

I believe that the NR mint mark is that of Bogota. Comparette and Hess of Frankfurt believe so too. NR probably stands for Nueva Reina de Granada. If I am not correct what is the mint mark of the Bogota mint which was one of the first established by Spain in the Americas. Up to the independence of the Spanish-American countries millions in gold were struck for Spain in Bogota. After the independence of Colombia the coins struck in Bogota show the name "Bogota" in full, or else the mint mark "B" but I have never seen or heard of a coin of Spain that showed either name or letter. If NR stands for Nicaragua where was the mint located during the

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Spanish possession? The only mint in Central America established by Spain that I know of was the one in Guatemala City which in 1817 placed the mint mark "N G" (Nueva Guatemala) on its issues.
Tonobert and Salbach assumed that N R meant Nicaragua and they have been followed by many Catalogues.

Among the coins in your list are two that are lacking in my collection. The 5 Soles 1863 of Peru and the 2 Escudos 1858 of Costa Rica. Have you these in duplicate? If so I would be glad to exchange a 10 Peso Salvador 1892 for them and I would be giving the Society very much the best of it in the trade.

Very truly Yours
H F Williams

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CHICAGO, ILL. Apr 22nd 1915

Mr. Howland Wood.
N.Y.

Dear Sir

Since 1907 I have endeavored to secure a description (when unable to obtain a specimen) of every type, in its different denominations, of the gold coins of independent Latin-America, that were intended to pass as money.

I have compiled these descriptions into three type written volumes (loose leafed), with a number given to each type denomination. In describing the piece I have given the legends and inscriptions in full and have attempted to describe the device or type.

I have also shown, as far as I have been able to learn, the dates of issue of each denomination and if catalogued by Fonrobert, Ulex or Salbach I have given their catalogue numbers. Also the condition of the Ulex and Salbach specimens and the prices they sold for.

When a piece, not described by any of the three collectors aforesaid, was shown to be in any other collection or sale I have given the facts.

Wherever I could obtain a photograph or illustration of a piece I have inserted it in the compilation and have also inserted the arms, in colors, of the various countries.

During the last three years I have obtained only three new descriptions and I feel that my work is practically finished.

Would the society like to have the compilation for

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its library and especially would it be of any use and interest to the members or officers? The work has been a labor of love with me and I realize that few collectors take any interest in my hobby. I am certain that the ground has not been covered before by any work printed in English. Jose T. Medina in his "Medallas y Monedas Hispano-Americanas" and Alejandro Rosa in his "Monetario Americano" may have covered it fully in Spanish. I have never been able to obtain their works and can not judge. I had intended to present the compilation to the Chicago Numismatic Society but with the exception of Mr Brand no member of the Society takes the slightest interest in the series covered by my work and I am not disposed now to give it to them.

Very truly Yours

Harry F Williams

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MEMBER OF VALUATION COMMITEE OF COOK CO.
REAL ESTATE BOARD 1908-1909

Dear Mr Wood

Your very kind letter of 12th inst. at hand. On the whole I am glad that you think as you do in regard to printing it in the Journal. I realize that the Numismatist would reach many collectors that had not seen my previous article and that the latter is somewhat on the same lines as my last monograph although it can not be compared to it as a work of reference. I had no thought of illustrating it if published.

I have seen Brand only once recently. He now figures on making a trip around the world, taking in South and Central America first and eventually landing in Switzerland permanently. He has been getting some shipments from Europe but not many. If Leon is buying for him I guess it is because accumulating coins is a disease with him. While he says that he is going to sort out his coins sometime and go into

the coin business, I do not think he will ever get around to it I am sure he would sell nothing but duplicates if he did become a dealer and it would take years to determine what were duplicates.

I shall not go where there is any danger of revolutions this winter I expect to go to California on the second of January and stay there until April

With best regards I am

Very truly Yours

Harry F Williams

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REAL ESTATE BOARD 1908-1909

Chicago Dec 26 1918

Mr Howland Wood
Broadway and 156th St
New York

Dear Mr Wood

your favor of 23rd enclosing the draft of your idea in setting up condensation of my monograph, received

I think the idea is excellent but I regret that it involves so much work on your part I do think that the comparative values should be shown however if the work is to have much value to the collector To classify coins as extreme rarities is hardly enough to give an idea of their numismatic value One may be an onza of old Argentine, which is in great demand in a country of rich and extravagant people and the other may be a 2 pesos of Confederation Granadina where the people of that country would not themselves pay much over the bullion value for the coin I have taken such facts into consideration in giving comparative values. I will be at the Maryland Hotel Pasadena Cal until April 1st

Yours very truly Harry F Williams

TYPES OF THE GOLD COINS OF COSTA RICA

As one of the States of LA REPUBLICA DEL CENTRO DE AMERICA

154. EIGHT ESCUDOS — Dated 1828-38

Obv. REPUELICA DEL CENTRO DE AMERICA Within a circle, a radiant sun over five mountain peaks. Date in exergue.

Rev. LIBRE CRESCA FECUNDO Acceiba tree dividing the marks of value (8-E) Mintmasters' initials preceded by C.R and followed by 21 Gs in exergue.

Extreme rarity — U.S. Mint collection*

155 FOUR ESCUDOS — Dated 1828-35-37

Obv. Type as preceding

Rev. Type as preceding.

Extreme rarity — Ulex*

156 TWO ESCUDOS — Dated 18285-48-59

Obv. Type as preceding.

Rev. Type as preceding

The 1850 has decorated edge o-o-o-o Others have hatched edge.

Rarety 5 — Fonrobert 7301*

157 ONE ESCUDO — Dated 1825-38-42-44-46-49

Obv. Type as preceding.

Rev. Type as preceding.

AMERICA *in legend abreviated to* AMER.

Rarety 3 — Fonrobert 7304*

158 ONE HALF ESCUDO — Dated 1825-28-42-46-49

Obv. REPUE. DEL CENT. DE AMER. Within a circle, a radiant sun over 3 mountain peaks. Date in exergue.

Rev. LIBRE CRESCA FEC, A ceiba tree dividing 1/2 - E Mintmasters' initials preceded by C. R. and followed by 21 Gs in exergue

Rarety 2 — Fonrobert 7298*

159 ONE ESCUDO — Dated 1849

160 ONE HALF ESCUDO — Dated 1846

After Costa Rica became a Republic it couterstamped many coins with the devi